

team. They trusted each other. They worked together. They didn't care who got the credit. One second you would be watching Tony Parker on a drive, the next second somebody else had the ball, and the next second they scored.

All of these examples of working together, teamwork, understanding, and knowing that cultural diversity is a strength, all of these things, that drive and that determination, that practice every day, day in and day out, all of those things are examples that are well-suited to those of us who serve in Congress and well-suited to the American public at large. Never give up; never quit. That patchwork quilt of a basketball team is the same mosaic that represents all of America.

And you know what? They weren't arrogant. They weren't hardcore. They come across just as they are, as humble, decent, good-hearted human beings. They are clearly the 23rd District's favorite basketball team. In fact, I have the privilege of representing several of them who live in the 23rd District. I think the more that America gets to know them, they will soon be America's most popular basketball team.

Congratulations to each and every member of the NBA champs, the San Antonio Spurs, their coaches, their staff, their owners, and congratulations to each and every one of their fans.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 17 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God of grace and goodness, thank You for giving us another day.

Your divine wisdom and power are abundantly sufficient for our many needs. Endow the Members of this assembly with a loyalty that never wavers and a courage that never falters as they seek to fulfill the high and holy mission which You have entrusted to them.

May it be their purpose, and all of ours, to see to the hopes of so many Americans that we authenticate the grandeur and glory of the ideals and principles of our democracy with the work we do.

As the House returns from visits to their respective districts, may we all

be mindful of and thankful for our fathers, or the men who were father figures for us, whose love and support enabled us to mature and become productive members of our American society.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WELCH led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

COMMON GROUND ON STUDENT LOAN REFORM

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, President Obama recently announced some changes to student loan repayment programs. Keeping with the pattern of his administration, he has chosen to impose those changes via the regulatory process.

For a while now, President Obama has been fond of saying he has a "pen and a phone" that he will use to codify his version of hope and change. Perhaps the pen is sufficient, but the regulatory process will take 18 months. The House is reauthorizing the Higher Education Act.

Working together, student loan reforms could be considered passed and implemented much sooner if only President Obama would pick up the phone, talk with Members of Congress, and find common ground; but that takes effort, and the President does not seem inclined to call.

Mr. Speaker, it seems this President has become so addicted to the pen that he no longer knows how to pick up the telephone.

INACTION LEADS TO NEW ATTACKS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as Islamic terrorists seize control of major Iraqi cities, it is clear that the President's failure to secure a status of forces agreement has jeopard-

ized the progress our military made to promote democracy and peace in the region.

We have known for years that the Iraqi Government was struggling to implement democracy. Instead of offering help, the President ignored lessons learned of successfully maintaining peace with an American reserve of air defense, as we have done in Germany, Japan, Korea, and now in Kosovo.

Even now, as the Middle East watches to see how the United States will react to the current crisis, the President is putting our families at risk as he negotiates with terrorists and communicates with Israel's enemies.

The President needs to change course, recognize the growing threat of international terrorism, and understand that failed diplomacy and inaction allows the creation of safe havens to attack us again.

Peace can only be maintained by strength as the terrorists proclaim: Death to America, and death to Israel. They mean it.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism with freedom to prevail.

THE VAPORIZING OF TWO YEARS OF IRS EMAILS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, crisis: IRS emails have vaporized.

Where, oh, where have the emails gone? Where, oh, where can they be? In another Friday evening news dump, the administration announced that 2 years of Lois Lerner's emails have vanished. Poof, gone.

That is not all. Today, we learned that the emails of six other prominent IRS officials involved in targeting conservatives have disappeared. Poof, gone. Isn't that an oddly convenient disappearance?

Have they gone to the same place the missing 18 minutes of Nixon's Watergate tapes went? The IRS blames the well-timed fiasco on a computer glitch.

Mr. Speaker, what do you suppose would happen if the IRS came to a citizen's home to audit their taxes and the citizen said, sorry, the records were lost in a computer crash? The tax collector would laugh.

It is time for a special prosecutor to investigate the IRS and find out where, oh, where have those emails gone. This yarn by the IRS requires a willing suspension of disbelief. Mr. Speaker, that dog just won't hunt.

And that's just the way it is.

HAMAS KIDNAPPINGS

(Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring attention to a serious